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Diary of a Chinese Soldier

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Diary of a Chinese Soldier

This report consists of excerpts from the diary of a Chinese soldier, first of the KMT, then the PLA. Entries go up to Aug 1949, and are significant only in showing general war-weariness of the soldier, confused state of mind, and the apparent easy conversion to the PLA. This soldier appears to have been above average as far as education is concerned.

21 [?] Jan 46, Nanch'ang - Saw a movie. All ⁱⁿ the world is unreal. If you have power you get anything. Heaven is mysterious, so are human fortunes. One must be careful in the world or suffer greatly.

19 Mar 46 Friend says: "If someone hits you, you don't have to hit him back"

21 Mar 46 After dinner went to a show learned that gambling isn't good.

Red Ink Entry
10 Jan 46 We left Nan-ch'ang by boat for Wu-ch'eng. The building at Wu-ch'eng had been destroyed by the enemy. On shore -----many days -----

11 Jan 46 At 5 am. left Wu-ch'eng to cross Poyang Lake. It looked very broad. In the afternoon we arrived at Hu-Kow, stayed there 30 minutes then started for Chiu-chiang. It was dark, a strong wind arose, and conditions were dangerous.

21 June 46 A man must learn to do good.

25 June 46 At 11 pm. 23 June we left Ch'ang-chou; on morning of 24th boarded the steamer Chiang-shun, (formerly of China Merchants'

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Co.) and sailed for Nanking at 2 pm. Stopped for night at Wuhu (?),
60 11 distant, started again at 4 am.

27 April 48 Fine spring, everything luxuriant, but I've lived hard
the last two years, with many frustrations. I'll soon drop out of
the army. The proverb says: "If I'm not employed, it is my fault;
if I don't get along, the sin is in me"

2 May 48 [Illegible] at Liu-chuang.

8 May 48 After enemy fled toward NE. battle was over, and we came
back to Liu-chuang.

18 June 48. I read an editorial saying that US supports Japan
because in a third world war the Japanese army will attack China:
and US revives Japan so Japan can be US vanguard.

6 Sep 48 Yesterday in Shanghai I bought a fountain pen for \$1.20.
Today I'll begin writing diary. I went in today and bought a paper
in Shanghai. It told of Feng Yu-hsiang's death on steamer returning
from USSR to China. In the afternoon went to movie in honor of our
company graduating, and also to welcome them from front. What a
contrast to my conditions on 6 July! I thought about this with
sympathy for men at front.

21 Sep 48 (In Shanghai barracks): Commander gave us talk on constancy.

27 Sep 48 (In Shanghai barracks) I was waked from dream by bugle,
rose quickly, put everything to rights. I remembered how after
fierce battle in Honan, on 1 Aug I received orders to go to Fukien -
I left Hsu-chow for Shanghai via Nanking. We left Shanghai, were

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suddenly ordered back, houses were not ready for us.

11 Oct 48 Yesterday was National Day. On the night before orders were received that there be no holiday on 10th---strange! I recalled last year in Nan-ku-choa how happy were the celebrations with big military display!

24 Dec 48 The times are tense. Traitors are scurrying south. The rascals! It's more glorious to die on battlefield than be cursed as curs, as these men are!

24 April 1949 The Eighth Route Army is nearing Shanghai, the papers say this morning. There was a battle at Soochow on the 5th. We Chinese are destroying ourselves. What a sad sight! The fight is reaching its last stages. (Condensed)

7 May 49 Today received one light-weight suit. Saw ^Ymorning pictures.

14 May 49 In morning was ordered to Tou-sung for stretcher duty. Fierce battle raged 3 hours.

16 May 49 At 5 pm. sound of firing. Enemy is attacking us, aided by aircraft.

19 May 49 Our group was ordered to defense duty on Chung-cheng Road.

22 May 49 Ordered from Chung-cheng Rd. to Railway North Station. After lunch saw famous actress in movies.

23 May 49 Idle this morning, read book at home. "The Road to Success" It said truly: "In self-control use subjective psychology: in supervision, criticise yourself objectively."

24 May 49 At 9 am enemy attacked. After brief fierce fight enemy entered; all became quiet; shops closed, cars stopped; We were liberated. There was street fighting; I slept through it.

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15 June 49 In the 18 days since we were liberated we have had meetings twice a day, and two indoctrinations daily on basic culture and politics, also early drill.

10 June 49 Since 28 May 8 am. when reactionaries withdrew, we have been stretcher corps, 178R, 60D, 20A, PLA, taking over. It has been a grand 12 days. Today we were given JMP 420 each.

15 June 1949 In the courses, the lecturers tell of Communist Party history and glorious exploits.

18 June 49 Today's papers proclaimed end of war and orders by people's revolutionary committee.

1 July 49 Today is 28th anniversary of our CCP, with its glorious success and the building of New China.

9 Aug 49 I feel today that I was born in a warlike age. I am the son of a small merchant. As a child I cared nothing for study, and as I grew up the Sino-Japanese War broke out. When the Japanese devils invaded our land, I joined the resistance, spent all my fortune to no result: then in six months civil war started. Now after 5 years PLA has won.

Financial Account

1 July 48
31 Aug. 48
14 Sep. 48

Received
760 yuan
760
840

31 Jan 49
28 Feb 49
31 Mar 49
16 Apr 49 (for secondary food)
31 Apr 49

108 yuan
405 yuan
707
50 cts. silver
1.00 in silver

The remainder of the diary consists mainly of maxims and proverbs.

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